



*Joseph Kraft*

## ABM Spotlight Beginning To Focus on Advisory Board

IN THE COURSE of the controversy about the anti-ballistics missile, or ABM, attention has suddenly begun to focus on the role of a little-known but important agency—the President's Intelligence Advisory Board.

At present the Board is fixed in a role that constitutes the weakest element in the ABM scheme advanced by the Nixon Administration. But by a single change—by giving the function now invested in the Intelligence Board to a different kind of group—the Administration could probably avoid a bitter-end fight that nobody can win.

To understand all this it is first necessary to say a word about the ABM debate. Superficially, it looks like a swinging affair with no holds barred.

But this seeming show of gusto is misleading. Many opponents understand that even beating ABM on an appropriations vote in the Senate, would not mean progress on the more important problems of dealing with the defense budget and the role of the military in American life. Many ABM proponents understand that the narrow win on an appropriations vote—which is the best they can hope for in the Senate—would not really settle anything.

Moreover, the terms of the debate, as set out by the recent round of excellent witnesses before the Senate Armed Services Committee, appear to be narrowing. Prof. Wolfgang Panofsky of Stanford, speaking for the ABM opponents, acknowledges that a missile defense might become necessary if the Soviet Union continues present development of strategic weapons. Prof. Albert

Wohlstetter of Chicago, speaking for the ABM proponents, admits that ABM deployment would not be necessary if the Communists stopped their missile development.

MORE AND MORE, in other words, the issue has become one of intelligence estimates about the other side. That is why the Senate Foreign Relations Committee had a briefing on the ABM from Director Richard Helms of the Central Intelligence Agency yesterday. And that is why attention is more and more turning to the President's Intelligence Advisory Board.

As explained by President Nixon in his March 14 statement on the ABM, the Intelligence Advisory Board is supposed to make a "yearly assessment" of the Soviet and Chinese "threat." On the basis of that assessment the Government and the country will decide whether to move ahead or stand still on full deployment of the ABM system.

But what is the Intelligence Advisory Board to which this vitally important review function is assigned? Well, it consists of ten distinguished—and rather elder—citizens, who serve parttime and are not entirely free of interest conflicts. Only two—Gov. Nelson Rockefeller and former UCLA President Franklin Murphy—can be said to have a primary commitment to internal public affairs.

THE REST READ like a small roster of the military-industrial complex. The list includes two retired military men (General Maxwell Taylor who is the chairman of the Board; and Admiral George Anderson); three former civilian officials at

the Pentagon (Gordon Gray Frank Pace and Franklin F. Lincoln); two scientist businessmen (Edwin Land of Polaroid and William O. Baker of Bell Laboratories) and former Under Secretary of State Robert Murphy.

The staff is headed by a former FBI man with no training in foreign policy. He has only two professional assistants. All of the past work of the staff has depended heavily on the support of the regular intelligence agencies. Most of it has involved the review of technical intelligence functions. Not a few Government officials think of the Board as a protective agency—a kind of public relations cover—for the intelligence community.

Plainly, the Intelligence Advisory Board is in no position to do any serious independent review of how changing international conditions affect the relative priorities to be attached to deploying an antiballistics missile. What is required for that task is a public commission made up of well known public men. The commission should include a generous sprinkling of men with a primary interest in domestic affairs. It should be supported by a staff that is not entirely dependent upon the existing national security bureaucracy.

Only such a body could make the kind of annual review the President has stipulated as necessary. But with such a commission, the major objections of most of the ABM opponents would be met. The way would be open for a compromise that could avert the unproductive showdown that otherwise seems to lie ahead.

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# Stennis Compromise on ABM Hinted

By JOHN W. FINNEY

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 23 — Senator John Stennis, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, showed signs today of groping around for a compromise on the missile defense issue.

The signs were still indistinct, but in the opinion of some of his colleagues it appeared that the Administration no longer could count upon Senator Stennis as a stalwart, down-the-line supporter of its proposed Safeguard antiballistic missile system.

As the Armed Services Committee concluded two days of public hearings, Senator Stennis made clear that he was inclined to proceed with deployment of an ABM system.

But, at the same time, the Mississippi Democrat appeared to be opening the door for some significant modifications in the proposed Safeguard system.

In the opinion of some of his colleagues, Senator Stennis has been shaken in his previous unquestioning support of the Safeguard program by a series of political and technical developments.

In the last two days, the committee has been exposed for the first time to the pros and cons on the ABM issue. Senator Stennis, in his questioning, has evidenced an interest in the argument raised by critics that the Safeguard system was not properly designed to carry out its principal mission of protecting the Minuteman missile force.

## Redesign Held Possible

This raised the possibility that the Senator might suggest some redesign of the Safeguard system, partly to meet the technical objections, but more importantly to bring about some unity within his committee on the issue.

In his new role as committee chairman, Senator Stennis is disturbed over the division that has developed within his committee over the ABM issue and is worried about the possibility that the committee may be split on the issue. He is reported to be simply adopting the Administration's proposal without change.

At this point, at least seven members of the 18-man committee are believed opposed to the Safeguard system. Rather than go to the floor with his ranks so divided, Senator Stennis is under considerable pressure to reach some compromise that could reunite at least most of the committee.

In terms of national priorities, Senator Stennis, like many of the ABM critics, also is increasingly worried about domestic problems.

As he pointed out to a reporter during a break in the day-long hearing, at this point he is more concerned about the "campus threat" than the "missile threat."

## Mansfield Proposal

As a conservative, Senator Stennis obviously is disturbed over the involvement of Negro radicals in the campus protests. But still his line of reasoning is one that brings him closer to the position of Senate majority leader Mike Mansfield, one of the leaders in the ABM opposition. That is that the time has come to strike a balance between domestic and military needs.

Senator Mansfield, in an interview, urged the Administration to set a "date certain"—perhaps in early June—for beginning strategic arms limitation talks with the Soviet Union.

If no progress has been made in the talks by the end of the

year, he said, then there will be "more justification" for proceeding with an ABM system.

Implicit in his suggestion was a possible compromise for the Administration, namely authorization of the system but a delay in its deployment until it is seen whether the Russians are interested in a limitation on defensive and offensive strategic missiles.

Also implicit in his suggestion was a signal to the Administration that it might be risking a serious political defeat in the Senate if it refused to compromise.

Contending that the anti-ABM forces were "gaining strength," Senator Mansfield predicted that the issue would be determined by one or two, at the most three, votes. An Administration victory by such a narrow margin, he observed, would be of "little consequence."

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee, a stronghold of the ABM opposition, meanwhile caught the Defense Department in what some members regarded as a deception in presentation of its case for the Safeguard system.

## List on Outside uExperts

In response to committee inquiries on what outside experts were consulted by the Pentagon in reaching the Safeguard decision, the Pentagon supplied a list of 21 members of the President's Science Advisory Committee who it said were "repent at discussion of ABM with Dr. John S. Foster Jr., director of defense research and engineering.

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In a footnote to the hearing

record, the committee noted, "This meeting was held on March 17 and 18, although the decision to proceed with the Safeguard was announced on March 14."

The Foreign Relations Committee continued to build up its case against the Safeguard system today with a secret briefing by Richard Helms, director of Central Intelligence, on Soviet missile developments.

After the briefing, Senator Albert Gore, who has challenged Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird's assessment of the Soviet missile threat, said, "I see no reason to change my estimate of the situation." It has been Senator Gore's contention that the United States possesses such a multiplicity of strategic warheads that the Soviet Union could not hope to achieve a "first strike capability," as contended by Mr. Laird.

The core statement, obviously reflecting assessments offered by Mr. Helms, provided a further hint of the division within the intelligence-military community over the potential Soviet military threat.

The same division developed among academic experts testifying before the Armed Services Committee. The committee heard today from Dr. George Rathjens, professor of political science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Aram Chayes, Harvard Law School professor — both ABM opponents — and Dr. Frederick Seitz, the retiring president of the National Academy of Sciences, and Dr. Albert Wholstetter, professor of economics at the University of Chicago, both ABM supporters.

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# Symington Links ABM to Budget Cuts

Sen. Stuart Symington (D-Mo.) said yesterday that if the Administration's anti-ballistic missile plan is not rejected the Senate will recommend a major "across-the-board cut in the Defense budget."

Symington, in a tough warning to the Senate Armed Services Committee, charged that the committee had accepted every weapons system proposed by the Pentagon in his 17 years on the panel.

"If on this particular system, we can't show that this can be deferred, I predict the Senate will recommend a major across-the-board cut in the Defense budget and tell the Administration, 'If we can't do it, you decide.'"

His comment came as the committee wound up two days of hearings on the Safeguard ABM proposal and heard more conflicting testimony from four witnesses.

Symington, who once was best known for his advocacy of big bombers and offensive missiles, also said: "I've been fooled badly in my time . . . It's not going to happen again."

In reply, Committee Chairman John Stennis (D-Miss.)

said the committee several years ago had stopped the Nike-Hercules air defense program, saving taxpayers \$900 million.

But Symington noted the Nike-Hercules program wasn't stopped until some batteries were in place and that many are still standing around major cities.

Stennis said that after hearing the eight witnesses in two days he has even "more confidence" that Safeguard should be deployed. "I'm afraid if we reject this, we will be giving up precious time," Stennis said.

Former Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey said yesterday that deploying the Safeguard system would seriously disturb European allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

It would "only raise doubts in Western Europe about our determination to consider the defense of the whole NATO alliance as one and indivisible," Humphrey added. It might prompt them to fear a new "Fortress America" concept, he said in a speech in Bloomington, Ill.

The Pentagon, meanwhile, issued a statement of assur-

ances that experts who have security clearance will be briefed on the ABM issue even if they oppose Safeguard. The statement was in reply to a complaint by Sen. Margaret Chase Smith (R-Maine) that one opposing scientist, Herbert York, was declined a briefing earlier this year by Deputy Defense Secretary David S. Packard. York confirmed the point Tuesday.

Packard said yesterday "We believe that the Safeguard ABM defense is a very important question and we want everyone, whether for or against this program, to have the full facts, consistent with security requirements."

Two anti-ABM witnesses, George Rathjens of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and former State Department Legal Adviser Abram Chayes, both testified yesterday they felt the addition of new offensive missiles would be less objectionable than building the ABM to protect U.S. Minutemen missiles.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee met yesterday with CIA Director Richard Helms. Afterward, Chairman J. William Fulbright (D-Ark.)

said Helms had provided "no information that would support" Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird's statements that the Soviets were preparing for a "first-strike" nuclear attack aimed at knocking out U.S. missiles. This argument is a primary part of the Administration's case for construction of the ABM system.